

September 22, 2011

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

RE: WT Proceeding 11-65

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

Pursuant to authorization granted by a majority vote of the members of SASDA (the Southern Association of State Departments of Agriculture) on Thursday, September 15, 2011, I am writing to you in regards to the potential merger between AT&T and T-Mobile. SASDA is the largest and oldest regional organization of Commissioners, Directors, and Secretaries of State Departments of Agriculture in the United States, and includes representation from as far west as Texas to as far north as Maryland and West Virginia. We respectfully request that the FCC encourage all efforts to expand 4G LTE mobile broadband areas, as doing so has the potential to link our more rural areas with urban centers around the world.

It is and will continue to be increasingly important for the agricultural community to have quick access to market data, weather conditions, GPS, and apps for monitoring chemical applications, as well as the ability to communicate in real-time with other farmers and ranchers. Wireless technology has already given some of our farmers the ability to multitask and improve their productivity and output. We would venture to say that expanded wireless connectivity has the potential to make our farmers even more competitive in the global economy, as they rely on real-time pricing data and market trends to make purchasing and sales decisions.

As it stands now, however, relatively few farmers and ranchers have been able to capitalize on such advancements, due in large part to the lack of broadband access in rural areas. As we understand it, we can accelerate the deployment of these advanced networks by giving telecom providers – such as AT&T and T-Mobile – the opportunity to combine resources. We are informed that with AT&T's investment plans over seven years following the merger, it will be able to build out its mobile network to an additional one million square miles, reaching 55 million more Americans than currently planned.

We encourage any action that has the effect of increasing our farmers' access to high-speed wireless service, and ask that you fully consider AT&T and T-Mobile's request, as it makes strides toward that end.

Sincerely,



Hugh Weathers, SASDA President

cc: Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Robert McDowell